

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 DHA-02 ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05
COME-00 /078 W
-----312341Z 006986 /70

R 311214Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3761
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 7751

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IN, CH
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER'S COMMENT ON CHINA

REF: CALCUTTA 1298 (NOTAL)

1. AT A NEWS CONFERENCE IN CALCUTTA MAY 30, PRIME MINISTER DESAI WAS ASKED WHETHER INDIA WOULD TAKE ANY INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH CHINA. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, DESAI REPLIED, "THEY HAVE TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE BECAUSE THEY WERE THE AGGRESSORS." THE INDIAN EXPRESS REPORTS THAT DESAI ALSO SAID, "WE WILL DO NOTHING TO WORSEN THE RELATIONS. THAT IS THE CONTRIBUTION WE ARE MAKING."

COMMENT: SINCE ASSUMING OFFICE, THE DESAI GOVERNMENT, PRINCIPALLY THROUGH ITS FOREIGN MINISTER, A.B. VAJPAYEE, HAS BEEN CAREFULLY NON-COMMITTAL REGARDING RELATIONS WITH CHINA. PUBLIC STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN LIMITED ESSENTIALLY TO EXPRESSING A DESIRE FOR FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES.
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TRIES ON A RECIPROCAL BASIS AND TO CAUTIOUS COMMENTARY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF AN IMPROVEMENT IN SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS. VAJPAYEE, FOR INSTANCE, WAS REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD A PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON MAY 21 THAT THE RESUMPTION OF TRADE WITH CHINA WAS A MODEST BEGINNING BUT THAT SOME BASIC QUESTIONS IN THE RELATION REMAINED WHICH INDIA WOULD WISH TO RESOLVE WITH FULL REGARD TO ITS HONOR AND PREVIOUS COMMITMENTS. IF

ACCURATELY REPORTED, THE PRIME MINISTER'S BLUNT STATEMENT
THAT THE CHINESE SHOULD BE THE SUITORS OF AN AGGRIEVED INDIA
WOULD SEEM TO UNDERMINE THE ELLIPTICAL OFFICIAL FORMULATIONS
OF VAJPAYEE. WE EXPECT TO GET MEA'S GLOSS ON THE STATEMENT
WHEN WE CALL ON THE JOINT SECRETARY FOR EAST ASIAN LATER THIS
WEEK.
GOHEEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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